



United States Diplomatic Mission to Nigeria, Public Affairs Section
Plot 1075, Diplomatic Drive, Central Business District, Abuja
Telephone: 09-461-4000. Website at <http://nigeria.usembassy.gov>

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U.S. Embassy Abuja Partners Channels Academy to Train Conflict Reporters

The U.S. Embassy Abuja, in partnership with Channels Academy, has trained over 150 journalists on Conflict Reporting and Peace Journalism. In her opening remarks, the U.S. Embassy Spokesperson/Press Attaché Jeanne Clark noted that the United States recognized that security challenges exist in many forms throughout the country, and that journalists are confronted with responsibility to prioritize physical safety in addition to meeting standards of objectivity and integrity in conflict. She urged the journalists to share their experiences throughout the course of the three-day seminar and encouraged participants to identify new ways to address these security challenges.

The trainer Professor Steven Youngblood from the U.S. Center for Global Peace Journalism – Park University defined and presented principles for peace journalism in conflict reporting. He cautioned journalists to refrain from what he termed war journalism. He said, "war journalism is a pattern of media coverage that includes overvaluing violent, reactive responses to conflict while undervaluing non-violent, developmental responses."

The Provost of Channels Academy, Mr Kingsley Uranta, showed appreciation for the continuous partnership with the U.S. Embassy and for bringing such training opportunities to Nigerian journalists. He also called on conflict reporters to be peace ambassadors.

The training took place virtually via Zoom on June 22 – 24, 2021. Journalists converged in American Spaces in Abuja, Kano, Bauchi Sokoto, Maiduguri, Awka, and Ibadan. At the same time, some joined from Channels Academy Abuja and the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) secretariat in Port Harcourt.

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